

NOTES

Indicator

Children who have been identified at risk or as having a developmental disability by service providers who are mandated to refer children to the Regional Center

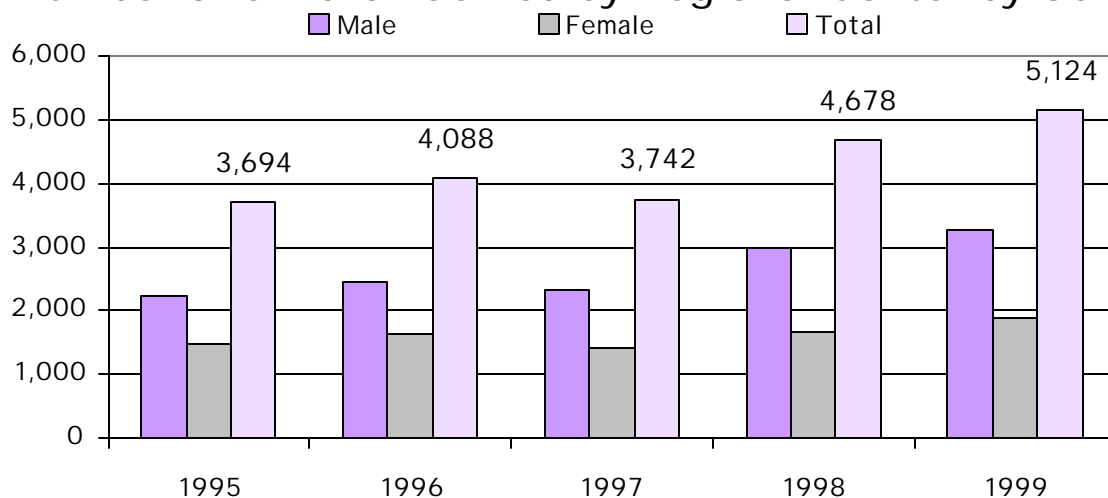
Definition

The total number of children under 18 years of age who utilized services at the Regional Center of Orange County. Children over 3 years of age have a diagnosed developmental disability. Children under 3 years of age are considered “at risk” for having a developmental disability and receive Early Intervention services under Part C of the Early Start Program.

Findings

In 1999, 5,124 Orange County children utilized services through the Regional Center. More than half of the children served were male, 3,255 or 64%, compared to 1,869 or 36% that were female. Of these children, 3,741 were diagnosed with a developmental disability.

Number of Children Served by Regional Center by Gender



Trends

Data from 1995 through 1999 indicates that there has been a 39% increase in the number of children under the age of 18 who have been diagnosed with a developmental disability. In 1999, there were 3,741 compared to the 2,695 in 1995. There have been consistently more male children diagnosed as developmentally disabled than female children. Moreover, all ethnic groups have experienced similar gains in receiving services for developmental disabilities between 1995 and 1999; Asian/Pacific Islanders by 61%, both Non-Hispanic Whites and Hispanics by 33% and African Americans by 19%.

RELATED INDICATORS:

- Early Prenatal Care
- Substance-exposed Infants
- Low Birth Weight
- Child Care
- Juvenile Arrests

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Number of Children with Developmental Disabilities* Under 18 Years of Age by Race and Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Non-Hispanic White	1,168	1,286	1,377	1,505	1,557
African American	69	82	75	89	82
Hispanic	942	1,047	1,075	1,185	1,250
Asian/Pacific Islander	283	330	362	364	455
Other	217	265	283	396	373
Unknown	16	16	17	19	24
TOTALS	2,695	3,026	3,189	3,558	3,741

Summary

Of the 5,124 children receiving services in 1999:

- 2,022 children were under the age of four, compared to 1,811 in 1998.
- 78 were AFDC/Medi-Cal clients and 1,196 were SSI**/Medi-Cal recipients, compared to 41 and 838 in 1998, respectively.
- 4,713 resided at home, compared to 4,418 in 1998.
- 167 were in Community Care Facilities (CCF) compared to 153 in 1998.
- 130 lived in foster care (Social Services Agency) compared to 92 in 1997.

Service providers who are mandated to identify and refer a child for assessment include hospitals, physicians, pre/postnatal screeners, child care programs, and education, public health, health care and social services agencies. Child Find activities are also used to identify eligible children for early intervention services.

Implications

Continued collaboration by the Regional Center, public agencies, health professionals and the community has resulted in earlier identification of children who have developmental disabilities and those at risk of developing a disability. Early intervention services provided under the Early Start Program (a state and federal collaboration) has resulted in children 0-3 years of age being provided services to address developmental delays caused by premature birth, neonatal seizures, multiple congenital anomalies, prenatal substance abuse or other conditions that may affect the development of the child. In many cases, children by the age of three who were provided services under the Early Start Program no longer require special services and are able to participate in regular school programs with their peers.

****Supplemental Security Income provides cash benefits for needy children with severe disabilities.**

NOTES

*Under California Law, the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act defines a developmental disability as autism, epilepsy, cerebral palsy, mental retardation or other conditions found closely related to mental retardation.

NATIONWIDE:
1 in every 12 children across America has a disability.¹ (Note that under federal law, the definition of a development disability also includes mental health and learning disabilities).

DATA SOURCE:
Regional Center of Orange County

NOTES:
¹The State of America's Children Yearbook, 2001